CLAIMS

Having thus described our invention, what we claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is as follows:

1. A method for controlling personal use of a device having operation which is controllable by an electronic control circuit, the method comprising the steps of:

reading user-related data from a user-associated user authentication means for processing by a device operation control logic,

the method being characterized by

said user-related data comprising selective information concerning a user-desired type of operation of said device,

reading operation type specific data from said device for processing by said device operation control logic,

processing both data for providing a result,

deciding according to said result if a user-desired type of operation of said device will be allowed or not, and

enabling or preventing said desired type of operation of said device according to said decision.

2. The method according to claim 1, in which said step of processing user-related data and operation type specific

data is performed at least partly on said user-associated authentication means by means of computing resources comprised of said user-associated authentication means.

3. The method according to claim 1, comprising the step of comparing current time information read from said device to predetermined time limits stored on said user authentication means for delimiting the duration of operation of said device.

4. The method according to claim 1, for selectively controlling operation of TV devices where the step of reading operation type specific data comprises reading at least one of: current date, current time, available channels, show-view-codes.

5. The method according to claim 1, used for selectively controlling operation of cars where the step of reading operation type specific data comprises reading at least one of: current date, current time, geographic position via a GPS-interface, accumulated duration of use in a predetermined time interval.

6. The method according to claim 1, for selectively controlling operation of at least one computer device.

7. A device, the operation of which is controllable by an electronic control circuit and being used as a controllable object according to the method according to claim 1.

8. A user-authentication means arranged for interaction with an operation control logic for a device according to claim 7, for use in the method according to claim 1.

9. The user-authentication means according to claim 8, being incorporated in a Smartcard.

10. The user-authentication means according to claim 9, wherein said Smartcard being selected from a Java Card, a Smart Card for Windows, or a Smart card based on the Multos operating system.

11. Interface means comprising connection means to an electronic control circuit controlling the operation of a device according to claim 7 and intended for performing the method steps comprising:

reading user-related data from a user-associated user authentication means for processing by a device operation control logic,

the method being characterized by

said user-related data comprising selective information concerning a user-desired type of operation of said device,

reading operation type specific data from said device for processing by said device operation control logic,

processing both data for providing a result,

deciding according to said result if a user-desired type of operation of said device will be allowed or not, and

enabling or preventing said desired type of operation of said device according to said decision.

12. An interface means according to claim 11, arranged for communicating with user-authentication means arranged for interaction with an operations control logic.

13. Interface means according to claim 12, characterized by being a Set-top box for being added-on a device being subjectable to the method steps.

14. A system comprising means for performing the method steps according to claim 1.

15. An article of manufacture comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied therein for causing controlled personal use of a device having operation which is controllable by an electronic control circuit, the computer readable program code means in said article of manufacture comprising computer readable program code means for causing a computer to effect the steps of claim 1.

16. An article of manufacture comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied therein for causing controlled personal use of a device having operation which is controllable by an electronic control circuit, the computer readable program code means in said article of manufacture comprising computer readable

program code means for causing a computer to effect the steps of claim 2.

17. An article of manufacture comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied therein for causing controlled personal use of a device having operation which is controllable by an electronic control circuit, the computer readable program code means in said article of manufacture comprising computer readable program code means for causing a computer to effect the steps of claim 3.

18. A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for causing controlled personal use of a device having operation which is controllable by an electronic control circuit, said method steps comprising the steps of claim 1.

19. A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for causing controlled personal use of a device having operation which is controllable by an electronic control circuit, said method steps comprising the steps of claim 4.

20. A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for causing controlled personal use of a device having operation which is controllable by an electronic control circuit, said method steps comprising the steps of claim 5.